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# UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA BULLETIN

STATE UNIVERSITY SERIES

NUMBER 213

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## THE COUNTY LIBRARY

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Missoula, Montana

MARCH, 1918

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# THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

EDWARD C. ELLIOTT, Chancellor of the University

The University of Montana is constituted under the provisions of Chapter 92 of the Laws of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly, approved March 14, 1913, (effective July 1, 1913).

The general control and supervision of the University are vested in the State Board of Education. The Chancellor of the University is the chief executive officer. For each of the component institutions there is a local executive board.

## Montana State Board of Education

S. V. STEWART, Governor .....	Ex-officio, President	
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The University comprises the following institutions, schools and departments:

## The State University, Missoula

Established February 17, 1893, and consisting of

The College of Arts and Sciences	The Summer Quarter
The School of Law	The Biological Station (Flathead Lake)
The School of Pharmacy	The Public Service Division
The School of Forestry	Special War Courses
The School of Journalism	Military Service Course (1 yr.)
The School of Music	Nurses' Preparatory Course (1 yr.)
The School of Education	Office Training Course (1 yr.)
The School of Business Administration	The Graduate Division.

Edward O. Sisson, President

## The State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, Bozeman

Established February 16, 1893, and consisting of

The College of Agriculture	The Agricultural Extension Service
The College of Engineering	The Secondary Schools
The College of Applied Science	Home Economics
The College of Household and Industrial Arts	Mechanic Arts
Courses for Vocational Teachers	Agriculture
The School of Music	Special War Courses
The Summer Quarter	Military Service Course (1 yr.)
The Agricultural Experiment Station	Nurses' Preparatory Course (1 yr.)
	Office Training Course (1 yr.)

James M. Hamilton, President

## The State School of Mines, Butte

Established February 17, 1893

Charles H. Bowman, President

## The State Normal College, Dillon

Established February 23, 1893, and consisting of

The Teachers' Certificate Course	The Four-years Course
The Three-years Course	The Rural Teachers' Course
	The Course for Supervisors

Joseph E. Monroe, President

For publications and detailed information concerning the different schools and colleges address the President of the particular institution concerned. Communications intended for the Chancellor of the University should be addressed to the State Capitol, Helena, Montana.

This bulletin is published in order that the people of Montana may have definite and reliable information as to the worth of county libraries and a guide to the correct procedure in establishing such libraries in this state.

Four county libraries are now in operation in Montana and are doing excellent work and have received the unqualified endorsement of the people of the four counties.

The State University, through its Librarian, will be glad to furnish all possible assistance to any Montana county or to any group of persons in a county, interested in the establishment of a county library. Communications in this connection will receive prompt attention.

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# The County Library

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## TEN REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING IT

1. A library is needed in every community as an integral part of public education.
2. It will reach the rural population and furnish books for every individual in the county. No matter what a man's job may be there is something in print which will help him do his work better.
3. This plan places a central library at the county seat and branches in every town, village, and school throughout the county.
4. The county library is a democratic institution and has for its ideal the betterment of the people.
5. It is supported by a small tax on county property and thus belongs to every citizen of the county.
6. The tax is small, not as much as one magazine subscription, and for this the taxpayer gets the benefit of having good books all the year round. It is far better for people to tax themselves for libraries rather than for almshouses, jails, and other asylums of misery.
7. There will be a trained librarian at the head, and this will guarantee the efficient and effective work of the library.
8. The schools need more reference books and more varied material on many subjects than they can obtain with their small library funds. They should have a county library to draw upon.
9. Debating teams and civic clubs can obtain material on any subject from the county library.
10. The youth of the country district must have more of the opportunities and pleasures that go to make up life in the twentieth century or the drift to the cities to the great detriment of the national welfare will continue.

## EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONS

A prominent educator has called the library "one of the three great educational forces which make the advancement of mankind."

No one, however isolated his dwelling place, can afford to be without the educational facilities afforded by our schools and libraries. Those who would be intelligent and effective citizens must be informed on economic, social, and political conditions of their locality, state, and nation.

Our schools are located in every district of the state however remote. Our libraries must not only be as extensive but more so,

and include not only those of school age but all the people of this great state. They must be free as schools are free.

The county library is an institution that will serve all the people of a county with reading facilities on all subjects in the most economical way. By co-operation from a central depot books and periodicals will be sent to individuals, groups of individuals, and schools in any part of a county by freight, by stage, by parcel post, or by whatever means is most efficient. Small collections will be placed in the country stores and post offices and these collections will be changed as often as necessary. The county library will insure the most effective work with economy of time, energy, and expense.

The library is a potent factor in the social service movement of the day. It is the one agency that will give the citizen of the most remote district the best that a large city can give to hers. It will co-operate with all other county institutions, unify our citizenship, and become an effective force for the advancement of social welfare.

#### HOW A COUNTY LIBRARY IS ESTABLISHED

The procedure in securing the establishment of a county library should in the main be as follows:

Form a central working committee which will represent the various groups and organizations of the community. Then district the county according to geographical or other desirable divisions and appoint local committees to work in the various districts to secure signatures to the petition which must be presented to the county commissioners.

The petition should read as follows:

We, the undersigned, resident tax-payers of the county of ....., Montana, do request and petition the honorable board of county commissioners of ..... county, Montana, to establish at the county seat of said county, a free public library in accordance with the provisions of chapter 45 of the Session Laws of the Fourteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana as amended by Chapter 137, of the Session Laws of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana.

Enough copies of the petition to supply one for each district of the county should be made. The number of signatures necessary should then be estimated by taking 20% of the last assessment roll. A larger number of signatures than required should be secured to guard against contingencies that may arise when the signatures are checked by the county clerk. The committee should make a careful study of the law to be sure that all the provisions are understood.

It is important that publicity be given the movement by articles published in the local papers.

The petitions should be placed in the hands of the county com-

missioners not later than the first of June in order that ample time before the tax levy is made in August.

The important features of the county library law are:

1. The entire county is made the unit for library service.
2. Towns already maintaining libraries may withdraw from the county library system in the event that such withdrawal seems desirable.
3. The movement for the establishment of the county library is initiated by a petition of the tax-payers, the final decision being left to the Board of County Commissioners. A provision for a notice to be published four weeks before the establishment gives sufficient publicity to the action.
4. Any county may contract with an existing city library to furnish library service to the people of the county upon the payment of such an amount as may be agreed upon by the library trustees and the Board of County Commissioners.
5. The county librarian is given large power in carrying on the work.
6. To forestall political and other appointments of any but those qualified for the positions, the county librarians must have had, before appointment, either experience in a library of good standing or training in a library school.
7. School libraries may become a part of the county free library.
8. A county library fund is provided by the levying of a tax of not more than one mill on the dollar.

#### COUNTY FREE LIBRARY LAW

Section 1. Upon petition signed by not less than twenty per cent of the resident tax-payers whose names appear upon the last assessment roll of the county, at least half of whom shall reside outside of the county seat, being filed with the Board of County Commissioners, requesting the establishment of a County Free Library, the County Commissioners of any county shall appoint a meeting for a public hearing and may in their discretion, by resolution, establish at the county seat a County Free Library as provided in this Act. For four successive weeks prior to taking such action, the Board of County Commissioners shall publish in each issue of a newspaper of general circulation in such county, notice of such contemplated action, giving therein the date and place of the meeting for a public hearing at which such action is proposed to be taken.

Sec. 2. After the establishment of a County Free Library as provided in this Act, the Board of Trustees, Common Council, or other legislative body of any incorporated city or town in the county may withdraw such incorporated city or town from the operation of this Act, by notifying the Board of County Commissioners that such city or town no longer desires to be a part of the County Free Library System, and thereafter the residents of such city or town

shall cease to participate in the benefits of such County Free Library, and the property situated in such city or town shall not be liable to taxes for County Free Library purposes; provided, that public notice of such contemplated action by the Board of Trustees, Common Council or other legislative body of any incorporated city or town desiring to withdraw such incorporated city or town from operation of this Act, shall be given by publication in some newspaper of general circulation in such city or town, for at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to taking such action giving therein the date and place of the meeting at which such contemplated action is proposed to be taken.

Sec. 3. Upon the establishment of a County Free Library, the Board of County Commissioners may appoint a County Librarian, who may be removed for cause, after the hearing by said Board. Any person who is a graduate of a library school, or has had two years' practical experience in a library of not less than two thousand volumes shall be eligible to the office of County Librarian; provided, that, from and after the creation and organization of a state board of library examiners, no person shall be eligible to the office of county librarian unless, prior to his appointment, he has received from said board of library examiners a certificate of qualification for such office.

Sec. 4. The County Free Library shall be under the general supervision of the Board of County Commissioners, who shall have power to make general rules and regulations regarding the policy of the County Free Library. The County Librarian shall have power to establish branches throughout the county, and may locate said branches and stations wherever deemed advisable; to determine the number and kind of employes of such library, and to employ and dismiss such employes. All employes of the County Free Library whose duties require special training in library work, shall be graded in grades to be established by the County Librarian, according to the duties required of them. Before appointment to a position in the graded service, the candidate must pass an examination appropriate to the position sought, satisfactory to the County Librarian, and show a satisfactory experience in library work; provided, that the County Librarian may also accept as apprentices, and who receive no compensation candidates possessing personal qualifications satisfactory to the Librarian and the Librarian may dismiss such apprentices at any time if in her judgment the work is not satisfactory.

Sec. 5. The County Librarian shall, subject to the general rule adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, build up and manage, according to the accepted principles of library management, a library for the use of the people of the county, shall establish branches and stations throughout the county, and shall determine what books and other equipment shall be purchased. The Library

building shall be under the general supervision and care of the County Librarian. The County Librarian shall be allowed actual and necessary traveling expenses incurred in the business of the office, and such compensation as the Board of Commissioners may fix. The Boards of County Commissioners of the several counties of the State are hereby authorized to audit and allow such traveling expenses and other compensation of the County Librarian of the respective counties and the same shall be paid out of the County Free Library Fund.

Sec. 6. The Board of County Commissioners, after a County Free Library has been established, may annually levy, in the same manner and at the same time as other county taxes are levied, a special tax not to exceed one mill on the dollar upon all property in such county, for the purpose of maintaining the County Free Library. County bonds may be issued in the manner prescribed in Sections 2905-2907 of the Revised Codes of 1907, of Montana, for the erection and equipment of County Free Library buildings and the purchase of land therefor. The Board of County Commissioners is authorized to receive on behalf of the county any gift, bequest, or devise for the County Free Library or for any branch or subdivision thereof. The title to all property belonging to the County Free Library shall be vested in the county. All laws applicable to the collection of county taxes shall apply to the collections of the tax herein provided. All funds of the County Free Library, whether derived from taxation or otherwise, shall be in the custody of the County Treasurer. They shall constitute a separate fund, called the County Free Library Fund, and shall not be used for any purposes except those of the County Free Library. Each claim against the County Free Library fund shall be authorized and approved by the County Librarian, or in his absence from the county, by his assistant. It shall then be acted upon in the same manner as are all other claims against the county.

Sec. 7. The Board of County Commissioners shall have power, to accept on behalf of the County Free Library all books and other property of school libraries as provided by Sections 1200-1205 of Chapter 12 of the Session Laws of 1913, of the State of Montana, and to manage and maintain the same as a part of the County Free Library.

Sec. 8. Whenever the county in which a school district library is situated shall maintain a County Free Library, the Board of School Trustees or city Board of Education may agree with the proper authorities of such county to make the school district library a branch of such County Library. In this event this Board of School Trustees or City Board of Education shall turn over the books to the County Free Library, and shall annually transfer to such County Free Library, its library fund, as soon as it is available, to be kept and expended as other funds of such County Library. The said



County Free Library shall thereupon have such district library managed and maintained according to the rules and regulations established by the authorities of the County Free Library.

Sec. 9. Whenever a school district library shall have become a branch library, as provided in Section 8 of this Act, the County or City Superintendent of Schools may draw a warrant for the whole amount of the district library fund, payable to the proper authorities of the County Free Library, upon the filing with him of a copy of the resolution of the Board of Trustees of the District or the City Board of Education, embodying the agreement made with such County Free Library, which copy shall be duly certified as correct by the Clerk and Recorder of the county, or other proper officer.

Sec. 10. After a County Free Library has been established it may, upon petition signed by not less than ten per cent of the qualified voters of a county requesting its dis-establishment being filed with the Board of County Commissioners, be disestablished in the same manner as it was established. At least once a week for four successive weeks prior to taking such action, the Board of County Commissioners shall publish, in a newspaper designated by them and published in the county, notice of such contemplated action, giving therein the date and place of meeting for a public hearing at which contemplated action is proposed to be taken; provided that an interval of three months shall elapse between such action and the dis-establishment.

Sec. 11. Instead of establishing a separate County Free Library, the Board of County Commissioners may enter into a contract with the Board of Library Trustees or other authority in charge of the Free Public Library of any incorporated city or town, and the Board of Library Trustees is hereby authorized to make such a contract. Such contract may provide that the Free Public Library of such incorporated city or town shall assume the functions of a County Free Library within the county with which such contract is made, and the Board of County Commissioners may agree to pay out of the County Free Library Fund into the library fund of such incorporated city or town such sum as may be agreed upon. Either party to such contract may terminate the same by giving six months' notice of intention to do so.

# Two Successful Libraries

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## CHOUTEAU COUNTY LIBRARY

By J. W. Lenning, Supt. of Fort Benton City Schools and Chouteau County High School.

I am not connected with the County Library in any way except as a patron but because of my position as superintendent of the Fort Benton City Schools and the Chouteau County High School, I have followed with interest the work of the library and the manner in which it is conducted. It was the first County Library to be established under the Free County Library law, and it has been in operation two years. A room was rented as a home for the library and a librarian was appointed to begin building up a library. The county is able to maintain an efficient library where no town or single community could.

In 1916, Joseph Hirshberg donated a building site for a library building in memory of his deceased wife and the commercial club of Fort Benton donated two adjoining lots so as to provide ample grounds for the library. In 1916, the Carnegie Foundation donated \$15,000 for a building after the usual required conditions had been complied with by the County Commissioners. The new building will be completed about June 1, 1918.

At the present time there are twelve branches, five stations and seven school branches in different parts of the County. A branch library is located in a country postoffice and a school branch is located in a school house. Each branch or station has a custodian who looks after the books. The books are changed at each branch or station at least once in three months. In this way a great many books are sent to each community during the year. In addition to these branches and stations, the County Library sends books to individuals any place in the county on request, carriage charges being paid by the County Library. In this way the people who are not near a branch library in any part of the county may make use of the Library by simply writing a letter to the Library at the county seat.

In sending books to the school branches, the librarian sends books that the children can understand—supplementary readers and children's books—but if adults wish to make use of the school library, books will be sent for them also.

Schools may turn in their library fund to the County Library if they wish, or, if they desire to use their own library money the County Librarian will buy the books for them and get the usual trade discount allowed libraries thereby saving money for the district. The County Librarian works in conjunction with the County Superintendent of Schools in this school library work and has pre-

pared an excellently graded list of books for grades from the first to the eighth which is furnished free to schools on request.

The town schools also get help from the County Library. In our schools here at Fort Benton we now buy few library books. We send our classes to the County Library for reference books and the students may draw out books on their own cards for home reading. The following letter was written to the County Librarian by the City Superintendent of Big Sandy, which is about forty miles from the county seat: "Our American History class is writing theses on the following subjects: Tariff, Slavery, Monroe Doctrine, Money, Territorial Expansion, and Educational Legislation. Please send me what material you have available on the above subjects." The books were sent immediately, all carriage charges prepaid. In this way the Library reaches and helps both the town schools and the country schools.

At the present time two thousand five hundred individuals have taken out cards and are making use of the library. It does not cost a resident of Choteau County any fee whatsoever to take out a card and avail himself of the library privileges.

I am very well satisfied with the work our County Library has done during the short time it has been in operation.

#### PHILLIPS COUNTY LIBRARY

By Mildred Scott, County Librarian, Malta, Montana.

Phillips County Library was established in July, 1916, and in December \$15,000 was secured from the Carnegie Corporation of New York for a county library building. The building, the first county library building to be erected in Montana, was completed in November, 1917.

Before taking up my work in Phillips County a few months ago, I had been told by various people how much a county library is appreciated, especially by those who are isolated from towns. But I had no idea of the welcome which our new County Library was to receive here. While the central library is well patronized by the towns-people, it is the people from the surrounding country, and in outlying districts where branches have been established, who have shown the greatest enjoyment of library privileges.

It has been impossible as yet to visit all of the communities where I hope to establish branches, but in the places visited, the enthusiasm has been general. Requests are coming in from other new communities, as the people learn of the Library. Everyone with whom I have talked has seemed much interested; in fact, the interest was so general that I almost feared it was too good to be true. But now that reports are coming in from branches, I realize that the interest was not only real but only half expressed. For example, I have word from one custodian in a mining camp fifty miles from town that, although the people have had the books only six or



seven weeks, some have read practically all and are asking for more, which will of course be sent out at once.

There has not been a day since we opened, even the coldest, that there have not been some country people in the Library, and they never fail to take out books, usually one for each member of the family. And whenever there is time to spare before leaving town, they very often spend that time in the reading rooms. Almost without exception, people from out of town are enthusiastic about the county idea as it is new to them and after considering it they decide that it is "certainly splendid." Many in the most isolated districts have told me how they missed the library privileges to which they were formerly accustomed, and how they never dreamed of having access to a library without being in or near a town. I find general surprise and wonder when I answer their questions as to the number of County Libraries in the state, and the opinion is invariably expressed that people in other counties surely do not know of the possibility or they would take steps toward establishing county libraries.

I give most attention, in this brief paper, to the work outside the county seat, because I believe that is the part of the work to be most emphasized; but the use of the Library and the interest shown by the people in town have been most gratifying, especially in the case of children. After school there are always a large number of children in the Library, and each day new ones are brought in by those who are already borrowers. They are also bringing the Library to the attention of their parents and doing good advertising in that way. The teachers have shown great willingness to co-operate and not only recommend books for their pupils to read but send them for reference material.

The children are very desirous of learning all about the Library, as was shown by one bright little girl a few days since. It was her first visit and she was interested in a poster telling how to become a user of the library. The last line on the poster reads, "No Red Tape? Not an Inch," and after reading it carefully her question was, "What do you use red tape for? I mean, what do other libraries use it for, I see you don't use it at all."

Judging by my experience here, I believe that all the County Library idea needs in this state to have it generally adopted, is advertising. I have heard not one objection to it in any way, nor to the small tax (one mill) connected therewith. Interest and enthusiasm are unanimous and very sincere.

# County Libraries and the Public School System of Montana

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By Mary Trumper, State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

One of our great handicaps in the public schools, and especially in our smaller schools, is the lack of good reading and reference books. Even where we find a large collection, the books are often poorly chosen and of very questionable value. The county librarian who is trained for her work is in a position to supply the school not only with well chosen books but with a much wider choice of selection than any district can afford. Adults as well as children can be well served, and also frequently served, with the particular books desired from the county library.

The stimulus and interest which are aroused in a school from the arrival of a fresh supply of well selected books is remarkable. The fact that new books are so seldom brought into the smaller school libraries in itself tends to lessen the interest of children in reading. They feel there is nothing fresh and interesting in their collection at school unless at least a few books are frequently added. This is often impossible, as many districts can ill afford even a small collection. In other districts many books already read by the children remain for years idle on the shelves. Just here the county library is of invaluable service in passing on to other localities books which have been read, and in bringing in a new and interesting supply when needed.

While there are certain kinds of reference books which every school needs to keep as a part of its permanent equipment, there is also a class of valuable literature, both reference material and otherwise, which is not especially desirable as a **permanent** collection for any school, if it can be secured for use when needed. Much unnecessary expense is incurred by districts in supplying themselves with books which, after they have been enjoyed by the community, could well be passed on to other districts. The county librarian is in a position to do this. Branch libraries throughout the county supply desired books readily and effectively. School districts are saved great expense through the plan of co-operation with the county library.

Whence once the reading habit is established we have accomplished much in the education of children. They soon learn that all knowledge on a certain subject is not confined within the covers of one particular book which may have been slavishly followed as a text in their school, and that there are many valuable sources of information if only the needed books can be secured. This habit well established in children becomes a lifelong habit of desire not only for information but also for recreation and enjoyment.

The county system as worked out in California and other states has demonstrated its value where efficiently managed by trained librarians with the assistance of apprentices of some training and experience. There is no reason why Montana should not work out her system as effectively as California has, if we set about the work intelligently and seriously. With the co-operation of boards of county commissioners, city librarians, teachers, public school authorities, parent-teacher associations, and all agencies which should be working to give boys and girls in villages and rural schools equal advantages with city children in regard to opportunities for reading, we shall soon find not only children but adults profiting from this most promising form of public service.

The county library meets the needs of all ages and classes of readers and should be promoted in order that its most valuable influence may be extended into the remotest corners of every county in the state.









